



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population nearing 700,000

Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population has reached 669,900 (or 3 per cent of the total population), according to figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) today.

The Director of Demography at the ABS, Bjorn Jarvis, said that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples mainly lived in urban areas.

"Contrary to popular belief, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population predominantly lives in Australia's most populous areas, with about 60 per cent living in major cities and inner regional areas, and just over 20 per cent living in remote and very remote areas," Mr Jarvis said.

"New South Wales has the largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population (208,500), followed by Queensland (189,000) and Western Australia (88,300). About three-quarters of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live in these three states.

"Almost a third (30 per cent) of the Northern Territory's population were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people - the highest of any state or territory. Victoria had the smallest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at just under 1 per cent.

"The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population has a younger age structure than the non-Indigenous population, with larger proportions of young people and smaller proportions of older people. The median age of the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population as of June 2011 was 22 years, compared to 38 years for the non-Indigenous population," Mr Jarvis said.

Further details, including the method of calculation, are available in Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2011 (cat. no. 3238.0.55.001) available for free download from the ABS website (www.abs.gov.au).

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